

Hunter's Surprise Party

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Hunter's Surprise Party

by [Cosmic_Radical](#)

Summary

When she learns that Belos never told Hunter his birthday, Willow gets the Hexsquad together to throw him his very first birthday party. She's determined to make it extra special, because Hunter deserves as much love as he can get (and maybe she has some growing feelings for him). The Hexsquad pairs off into different groups as they head on an adventure to the mall, but things might be a little more complicated than Willow thought. Can these cringey neurodivergent disasters work through their individual struggles to give Hunter a magical day?

Notes

Hey everyone! This fic was written as part of the Hexes and Os zine Secret Santa gift exchange. It is my first multi-chapter fic; it won't be super long but definitely the longest fic I've written. Each chapter will follow a different POV and explore that character. Obviously the crux of the fic is about Hunter's party, but I wanted to have some individual focus on each member of the Hexsquad as well, before they all meet back up for the final part.

There will be some light angst, and also Luz's chapter will include references to ableist bullying, so be aware of that. However, this fic is meant to primarily be a fluffy feel-good story about cringey neurodivergent teens being silly, and it will remain so. Expect Warrior Cats references, sibling bonding, Camila being amazing, and more.

Also I've never written Huntlow before; I do hope Willow and Hunter are in character for this.

See the end of the work for more [notes](#)

Hunter was still smiling, but it wasn't like it was before. Willow could tell the difference, because his genuine smiles used to be so rare. Over the past few months, she had gotten to see him smile more than she ever thought she would, and that gap-toothed grin was imprinted on her mind. This smile was a fake. No one else seemed to have noticed; they were all rambling happily, just as Hunter had been a few moments before. The smile had only slipped when they shared their birthdays.

Amity had been trying to explain the Boiling Isles calendar to Luz, but it just made her more confused, and they had all laughed as they tried to figure out when their birthdays were in the human calendar. And then they had gotten to Hunter.

"When's your birthday?" Vee had asked.

And just like that, Hunter's smile slipped. "Oh, uh...I don't really know. Belos never told me."

Amity furrowed her brow. "But--"

Luz interjected laughing nervously. "Hey, I forgot to tell you all about the cutest little rat that showed up at the vet today! She had these tiny little paws, and --"

Luz was the worst liar Willow had ever met; she was practically sweating, but the group let it go. Only Willow noticed the soft exhale Hunter let out, and his attempt at smiling once more. As much as Willow loved her friends, they were shockingly bad at picking up on this sort of thing. Hunter didn't like to talk about Belos, even though he had been with him for almost his entire life. Willow saw the way he flinched whenever Camila entered the room, and tensed up, baffled, when he received affection. That he had never experienced a birthday celebration wasn't surprising at all, but it still hurt to have it confirmed. Willow's dads always threw huge parties for Willow; she didn't even like them so fancy, but her dads were always the type to go overboard, and she was grateful all the same. To not have any acknowledgement at all...

An idea took root in her head, an idea so exciting she wanted to spill it out on the spot. But no, if she wanted this to work she'd have to wait, and not do anything to arouse his suspicion. He deserved a surprise, and she would make it happen.

Clover buzzed onto her shoulder, and somehow, though the bee lacked eyebrows, it looked like she was raising one. Willow rolled her eyes at her Palisman. Clover had been teasing Willow these past few weeks. Yes, Willow held a special place in her heart for Hunter. And yes, that special place might, *might*, be a romantic one. But she wasn't about to say anything, not while he was still adjusting to even having platonic friends.. Clover buzzed at her once more and she shushed the bee with her finger. They had had several arguments about this, but she was firm. Hunter needed time to just exist; it would be selfish to start openly flirting with him at this point. But that didn't mean she couldn't let him know how special he was to her, and she now had the perfect plan. She just needed to get Camila's permission first, given its ambition.

Willow waited until it was time for bed before broaching the subject. Camila always told each of the kids goodnight in the exact same order, so Willow waited on the hallway landing for her to emerge from the boy's basement.

"Willow!" said Camila as she ascended the stairs. "Do you need something?"

"Um, actually, I was wondering if I could talk to you about an idea I had." She explained about the birthday conversation, and how sad Hunter had looked. Camila's face fell when Willow told her about how he had never had a birthday before. And then Willow broke the idea - the entire household would throw a surprise party for Hunter, with gifts, cake, decorations, and all. "We've been earning pocket money so we can buy our own gifts, but I wanted your permission to use the house, and also maybe help with the cake since...uh..." She didn't need to mention the disaster that had resulted when the squad had gotten together to make a cake for Camila.

"That's such a good idea!" said Camila, flinging her arms up in excitement but quickly lowering them with a sheepish look. "He'll be so excited. Don't worry, I'll do everything I can to help. I'll take him out for the day so you can all go shopping. Ooh, and we can get party streamers and balloons! I always love planning birthdays." She clasped her hands together in a pose Willow had seen Luz do countless times, and Willow suppressed a giggle at the sight. Camila was obviously self-conscious about it, so she didn't react outwardly, but it was sweet to see Luz's mom had the same goofy tendencies as her daughter.

"Thanks, Camilla!"

"Of course. You have such a kind, strong heart."

Willow flushed. "Well, Hunter deserves it."

Camila nodded. "I know he's very important to you."

"All of my friends are."

"Oh yes, all of your friends. You care for everyone so much." But there was a look in her eyes similar to the one Clover had given earlier. Willow chose to ignore it. She had Camila's full support. Now she just had to get the others involved, without any of them giving the surprise away. That might prove more of a challenge.

“I need to talk to you guys,” said Willow to Vee, Amity, and Gus. It had been several days since she originally thought of her plan, and she hadn’t had an opportunity to talk to anybody without Hunter being in the house. Finally, though, Camila had suggested he take a trip to the library, since he had recently gotten an intense interest in wolves, and Willow was granted at least an hour with her other friends.

Amity and Vee were flopped on the couch in front of the TV, completely zoned out, while Gus perched on the armrest, happily fidgeting with a small beaded dinosaur.

“About what?” said Amity, glancing up at Willow.

“You’ll see. Where’s Luz?”

“In the bedroom. She said she wanted some alone time but that was like an hour ago.”

“Okay, I’ll go get her. Turn the TV off and get ready; this is important.”

“Hold on, this is the best part,” said Gus, leaning closer to the screen. “Just give it a minute.”

“I’ll be a minute getting Luz.”

Gus didn’t answer. Willow sighed. She loved her friends dearly, but they weren’t always the most focused bunch.

“Luz?” Willow tapped on the door once she reached the shared bedroom upstairs, but there was no response. “Luz, I need to talk to you.”

She laid her ear against the door, and inside she could faintly hear music leaking from Luz’s headphones.

“No alarms and no surprises...”

“Luz?”

The faint trickle of music continued, only now she could hear Luz singing along.

Willow huffed and opened the door. Luz immediately paused the music, sitting up straight in bed with her headphones slung around her neck, a guilty expression on her face. “Oh, hey Willow. Sorry if I didn’t hear you knock.”

“It’s fine. Come meet me in the living room, I’ve got something to say to everybody.”

“Everybody? You need to wait then, Hunter’s at the library.”

“Exactly,” said Willow, winking, and Luz raised an eyebrow. Willow didn’t have time to waste explaining.

She headed to the living room, where Amity, Gus, and Vee had failed to listen to her request. “Uh, guys? Remember I need to talk to you.”

“Hold on Willow,” said Gus. “This is the best part!” The scene was an entirely different one from the one that had been playing when Willow left, so Willow summoned a plant to snatch up the remote and turn off the TV.

“What?” Gus cried. “Why?”

“I’m planning a surprise for Hunter,” said Willow, shaking off her mild frustration. “A birthday party.”

Luz perked up immediately. “Willow, that’s a great idea! He’ll be so happy, oh my gosh!”

“I know! I was thinking we could make it happen this weekend. I’ve heard Vee mention a place called the mall that she said is kind of like an indoor version of the Bonesborough market?”

“The mall? We’re going to the mall?” Gus forgot his TV show instantly. “I’ve always wanted to do that! Can we visit the battle arena?”

“The...battle arena?” Luz asked.

“And is it true you stuff the skins of fearsome predators and dress them up in clothing to humiliate them?”

“Uh...” Luz laughed. “No. The mall is dangerous, but not in that way. It’s more the social kind of danger.”

“It’s not dangerous at all,” said Vee. “I hang out there all the time. I can show you guys around!”

Luz furrowed her brow, but the conversation had already moved on.

“Ooh, we’ll shop together, Willow!” Amity’s ears perked up as she got to her feet. Her ears had always been more expressive than the typical witch, but after their friendship ended Amity had worked hard to suppress their movements. Now she was always wriggling and twitching her ears. Willow was happy for her, she really was, but at Amity’s suggestion a coldness crept in. It was a coldness Willow had been working hard to hide. Amity had been wanting to hang out with her a lot lately, and she enjoyed it, truly. But there was still a lingering feeling of resentment, and Willow was ashamed to admit it. And the way Amity acted like nothing had ever happened, just stated that they would be hanging out together, as if things had never been anything other than great between them...

Amity remained grinning, clearly failing to notice anything wrong.

Amity’s nice now. There’s no reason to feel annoyed.

Willow pushed her feelings down. “Yeah, sure. Gus, you want to come with us too?”

“I was actually thinking I could go with Vee. She’s clearly a human expert and I want to ask her some stuff.”

“Great, Luz can go with you two as well.” Willow was *not* getting third-wheeled again. “Now that that’s settled, Camila’s going to take Hunter out on a trip this weekend and we’ll go get our gifts then. And they need to be meaningful, okay? This’ll be Hunter’s first birthday, and I want it to be special. And absolutely *no* spoiling the surprise.”

Gus leaped to his feet and gave a dramatic salute. “Yes, ma’am!”

“Great!” Willow grinned. She could already picture Hunter’s wide, baffled eyes when he saw the party, and then the way his confusion would melt into an ecstatic smile when he realized it was for him. Willow held that image in her head for the rest of the evening.

Please comment your thoughts if you enjoyed this! I really love comments, even if they're just a simple "Enjoying the story."

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